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CHFS Focus Employee Spotlight: Currie comes out of retirement to help ensure government accountability

George W. Currie came out of retirement when CHFS' Inspector General Robert J. Benvenuti, III called and asked him to become OIG's director of the Division of Audits and Detection.



"I was perfectly happy doing what I was doing until Robert called and recruited me for this position. Robert has a vision for this cabinet which I highly support," says Currie. "That vision is to eliminate any fraud, waste, and/or abuse no matter where it may lead. Having great respect for Robert as a man of extremely high integrity, I accepted the challenge."

Currie grew up in Brooklyn, New York where he intended to follow in his family's footsteps as a New York City policeman. However, his plans changed because the Marines came first; and while serving his tour in Vietnam, he decided to become a federal law enforcement officer.

He retired as a supervisory special agent with the Criminal Investigation Division of the Internal Revenue Service's Lexington Office after 28 years of service. During that time he worked with a multitude of other federal, state and local law enforcement officers across the country. In fact, Currie briefly worked with Steve Brodt, now director of OIG's Division of Special Investigations, while he was with the IRS and Brodt was with the Kentucky State Police.

"I believe that everyone must be held accountable for their actions," says Currie. "I am a strong advocate of cooperation between units to get the job done in an effective and efficient manner for the benefit of all Kentucky citizens."

After his retirement from federal service, Currie accepted what he thought would be his retirement job with the University of Kentucky's Internal Audit Department. According to Currie, "I thoroughly enjoyed the work and it was the perfect retirement job." Or, so he thought.

That was before he met Inspector General Benvenuti who also worked at UK. They collaborated on a couple of cases and realized they shared the same views on accountability. "Robert is one of the most ethical and genuinely honest people I've ever met," says Currie. So, when Robert called and offered him the director's position,

he had little hesitation about accepting. "I am not a political person at all, I believe whoever commits any misdeeds should be held accountable. When Robert assured me that my beliefs were strongly shared by Secretary Holsinger and Governor Fletcher, it sealed the deal."

"There is no question that George is the perfect person to head the division. He clearly has the character, passion, and experience needed to lead the division," states Benvenuti.

Currie is enthusiastic about his new retirement job. "I am excited about the challenge of directing the Division of Audits and Detection. We have an extremely talented group of auditors who are dedicated to this division and cabinet."

The Division of Audits and Detection provides independent appraisals, analyses and counsel related to the assessment of risk, identification and implementation of internal control improvements, compliance with Federal and State regulations, cabinet policies and procedures and the evaluations of procedures used to provide oversight of risk and control processes.

"We are here to assist management carry out their operations in an effective and efficient manner. Any employee who suspects waste, fraud or abuse within their division or area of responsibility should give us a call at 564-2642," says Currie. "All calls are in confidence. The caller need not prove the allegation; that is our job, but we must have the information before we can conduct an audit."

"I believe the division represents a previously untapped resource which can play a vital role in this administration's efforts in detecting and eliminating fraud, waste, and abuse," says Benvenuti. I look forward to providing George and his team the support necessary to see that we fully capitalize on the skill and hard work of our auditors."

In addition, Currie is teaching an Auditing Class at the University of Kentucky for accounting seniors. "I enjoy working with young people and become refreshed with the enthusiasm of the college seniors," he said.

"Heading up the Division of Audits and Detection is a wonderful opportunity to put my former career experience and views on accountability into practice," says Currie. "Some jobs are just worth coming out of retirement and this is one of them."

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CHFS Focus Program Spotlight: Small but mighty - The Division of Women's Physical and Mental Health empowers through education and information

The Division of Women's Physical and Mental Health (DWPMH) may be the smallest of all the cabinet divisions – just two people on staff – but it dreams and delivers big.

Led by director Joyce Jennings who is ably assisted by Program Administrator Melissa Adkisson, the DWPMH works to provide information, education and resources to women, organizations, institutions and other groups with an interest in advancing wellness and good health on behalf of Kentucky's female population.

For eating disorders awareness week earlier this month, the division issued a news release with valuable information on the signs and symptoms of eating disorders as well as sources to access for help. Jennings said eating disorders are complex health issues that can have lasting effects on sufferers, their families and others. But, few people understand the very real physical and mental issues that can trigger eating disorders and that work to make them so difficult to treat.

"Information is power," Jennings said. "One of the main objectives of this division is to empower people, especially women, by providing good, accurate, useful information they can use to minimize risks and maximize opportunities to improve their health and the health of their children, families and other people in their lives."

An ongoing emphasis of the DWPMH is the role of the mind-body-spirit connection on personal health. The division recently co-sponsored an overnight retreat at Natural Bridge State Resort Park to introduce a program offered through the University of Kentucky's Cooperative Extension Service that capitalizes on that tripartite connection to health.

The program, called "A World of Possibilities," is a Web-based human development curriculum consisting of 10 education modules, all designed to help participants develop core skills to help them better deal with challenges and opportunities that arise on and off the job.

The introductory retreat gave those who attended a glimpse of the whole curriculum and an opportunity for cabinet and extension service leaders to discuss mutual benefits that may be derived from offering the program to cabinet clients and, perhaps, even staff.

April Vandeventer, Deputy Commissioner of the Department for Community Based Services, attended the retreat and remarked that some components of "A World

of Possibilities" address a critical issue for all case work staff and their clients: stress.

"Women in the helping professions often forget that we are our primary tools," Vandeventer said. "We would never expect a carpenter or an airline pilot to fail to maintain his or her hammer or airplane. Yet, we are dismal at self care. The Women's Health Retreat was an opportunity to nourish ourselves so that we, in turn, can be more effective. I am happy to work for an organization that acknowledges that necessity and provides such a wonderful opportunity."

Jennings said the division will continue to seek opportunities to partner with effective information and education providers, like the Extension Service, to empower Kentucky's women not just to understand and care about health issues, but also, to actively protect and enhance their personal health and the health of their families, clients and others.

Those attending the Women's Health Retreat at Natural Bridge gained insight into the body-mind-spirit connection to wellness. Plans are being considered to train more CHFS staff to offer components of the "World of Possibilities" health awareness curriculum to their colleagues and clients.



Sheila G. Eckler award nominations due next week

Award honors outstanding family support staff

By Anya Armes Weber

Nominations for the Sheila G. Eckler award are due next Tuesday, March 15, and should be directed to the Department for Community Based Services Commissioner's Office.



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Employees in the family support worker series or supervisors with direct service experience are eligible for nomination.

Supervisors may nominate staff, and each region should review its nominations and select one regional nominee.

Nominations cannot exceed two pages and should include biographical information and a description of each nominee's exemplary work performance. KAMES and other records may be evaluated in order to verify work habits.

The award is a tribute to Eckler, a Pulaski County family support worker who died on the job seven years ago.

A three-member committee will review nominations. All identifying information -- including nominees' names and work sites -- will be removed from entries before the judges' review.

Regional nominees and the award winner will be recognized at a presentation ceremony May 18 at the SRA/SRAA meeting in Louisville.

Send nominations to Marcia James at Marcia.james@ky.gov, or mail them to James at 275 E. Main St., 3W-A, Frankfort, KY 40621. For more information, contact James by e-mail or by calling (502) 564-3703.

Application deadline for employee recognition group is next week

By Anya Armes Weber

Staff interested in joining the workgroup forming to create a cabinetwide employee recognition plan may apply through next week.



Applications are due Tuesday, March 15. Interested staff should complete the one-page employee recognition committee application available for download at <http://chfs.ky.gov/olpa/dc/focus> and get their supervisor's signature of approval.

Forms must be returned to group member Jean Kendell of the Training and Professional Development Branch in the Office of Human Resource Management. Kendell's address is 275 E. Main St., 5C-D, Frankfort, KY 40621. Or e-mail her at jean.kendell@ky.gov.

If you are unable to join the group, you can still participate by sending your ideas on what kinds of recognition programs your office provides and what activities interest you. Send them to employee recognition team member Bobbie Walters at bobbie.walters@ky.gov.

Secretary's Forums scheduled for March

By Anya Armes Weber

The first Secretary's Forums of the year have been scheduled for later this month.

Secretary James W. Holsinger will speak to Frankfort staff at four sessions in the Health Services auditorium.



Employees will hear about the 2005 legislative session, cabinet wellness promotion and other issues affecting the cabinet and will have the chance to ask questions.

Forums are scheduled as follows:

Wednesday, March 30: 11 a.m. - 12 p.m., Supervisors

Wednesday, March 30: 1 - 2 p.m., Staff

Thursday, March 31: 2 - 3 p.m., Staff

Friday, April 1: 10-11 a.m., Staff

Regional staff can look for forum transcripts online and will be able to view a video of the event.

CHFS Focus Health Tip of the Week: It's National Kidney Month

By Anne Parr, R.N., Employee Health Center

Kidneys do much more than produce urine. These two amazing fist-sized, bean-shaped organs are about 5 inches long, 1 inch thick and are located in your back on each side of your spine.

The basic function of kidneys begins when you eat and drink. After the body takes the nutrients it needs, the extras become waste. Some of the waste winds up in the blood and needs to be filtered out. The blood gets circulated through the body with every beat of the heart. It's the job of the kidneys to filter and clean the blood and remove extra fluids. Extra fluid and waste become urine and travel from the kidneys to the bladder and then are eliminated. Removing waste is only one job of the kidneys.

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The kidneys are powerful, life-sustaining chemical factories and are among the hardest working organs in the body. Each day healthy kidneys:

- filter and return to the bloodstream about 200 quarts of fluid every 24 hours;
- excrete about two quarts of waste fluid from the body in the form of urine, and recover and clean about 198 quarts;
- circulate the entire body's blood supply every two minutes;
- eliminate waste products from the body;
- remove drugs from the body;
- balance fluid content in the body;
- produce the enzyme renin that helps regulate blood pressure;
- activate vitamin D to maintain healthy bones and teeth;
- control the production of red blood cells;
- adjust levels of minerals and other chemicals to keep the body working properly; and
- monitor the levels of chemicals, salts and acids in the blood and remove the excess from our blood when levels are high.

For more information about your kidneys, visit the National Kidney Foundation's website at www.kidney.org.

Governor and First Lady to host First Annual Easter Egg Roll at the Governor's Mansion

Children are invited to a fun-filled day at the Mansion

On Saturday, March 19, the lawn of the Kentucky Governor's Mansion will play host to children from across the Commonwealth enjoying a Frankfort first with an "Easter Egg Roll at the Mansion." The event hosted by Governor Ernie Fletcher and First Lady Glenna Fletcher will begin at 9 a.m.

"The Governor and I are excited to have the children of Kentucky for this very special event at the Governor's Mansion," First Lady Glenna Fletcher said. "This event is a great way to give our children wonderful memories to cherish for a lifetime."

Children ages three to ten can spend the morning participating in the Easter Egg Roll on the Mansion lawn, decorating eggs and enjoying many other activities.

The Governor and First Lady are also asking for your help to promote literacy by donating a children's book to be

collected and given to a local charity. "If we can spark at least one child's interest in reading with these books, then we are giving that child a gift of lifelong learning," stated Mrs. Fletcher.

Books can be dropped off at any ticket location or at the Mansion on Saturday, March 19.

Tickets are free and the event is open to the public. Parents must pick up tickets for each child before March 19 at one of the designated locations. Tickets are limited and will be available on a first come, first serve basis.

In Frankfort, tickets are available at both Fifth Third Bank locations and at the downtown Frankfort Tourism Commission or by calling 502-695-4968. You may also email your request to eastereggroll@hotmail.com.

For more information about The Easter Egg Roll at The Mansion, visit the First Lady's web site at www.firstlady.ky.gov.

Cabinet co-sponsors regional youth conferences aimed at teen tobacco prevention

Five regional youth conferences will be held in March and one in May aimed at increasing awareness of tobacco-related issues and tobacco prevention activities and advocacy efforts started by young people.



The conferences are being co-sponsored by the Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program in the Department for Public Health (DPH) and the Kentucky ALERT Regional Prevention Center Tobacco Prevention Enhancement Site.

"As physicians, Governor Fletcher and I both know how important it is to tackle tobacco use, and the Governor has demonstrated his leadership on this issue through his inclusion of an increased cigarette excise tax in his historic tax modernization plan passed by the General Assembly this week," said Dr. James Holsinger, Secretary of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services.

The conferences fit into the overall Get Healthy Kentucky! initiative, supported by special advisor First Lady Glenna Fletcher. The First Lady sits on the initiative's board, which is charged with leading the effort to improve the health of Kentuckians. Mrs. Fletcher said, "Tobacco use remains one of the most harmful threats to the health of Kentucky. We must educate our young people and empower them to spread the facts that will help prevent

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other young people from beginning to smoke or use other tobacco products.”

There are expected to be 100-200 teen participants at each conference to attend a mix of breakout sessions and group exercises. Attendees will be asked to come up with possible names for Kentucky’s youth tobacco prevention movement and elect an advocate to the state youth council. The conferences will be led by adult leaders from Family Resource/Youth Service Centers, Regional Prevention Centers and local health departments, among others.

Members of the media are encouraged to attend. The remaining conferences will be held as follows:

- 9:20 a.m. - 3 p.m., **March 12:** Russell County Middle School, Russell County
- 8:30 a.m.- 2 p.m., **March 16:** Holiday Inn University Plaza and Sloan Convention Center, Bowling Green
- 8:45 a.m. - 6:30 p.m., **March 19:** John Hardin High School, Elizabethtown
- 11:45 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., **March 22:** The Stadium, Lexington
- 8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., **May 11:** Curris Center, Murray State University

Statistics from the 2003 Kentucky Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) show that: 32.7 percent of Kentucky high school students smoke; 23.5 percent of high school males use smokeless tobacco; 12,500 Kentucky teens become new regular daily smokers each year; and an estimated 18.4 million packs of cigarettes are bought or smoked by kids in Kentucky each year.

The Big Move Continues at the CHR Building

The Department for Medicaid Services began its move March 7 and the move is scheduled to continue through March 17. Staff with the Office of Inspector General will be realigned on the fifth and sixth floors. In light of these big moves, it’s a good time to review the moving guidelines and to keep in mind that the goals of the Cabinet’s “big move” involving its Human Resources Complex offices are to group agencies by function and to do it as economically as possible.



These changes locate department staff closer to each other and allow for more collaborative working relationships. It is certainly much more efficient, not to mention easier, to walk two or three cubicles to talk to a colleague face-to-

face, than travel two or three floors or communicate by phone and email.

During this time, please keep in mind the *12-Step Guide to the Big Move*;

1. Some temporary moves will be necessary. Leased Property staff worked hard to keep temporary moves to a minimum; but, this approach is necessary since "flex" space is not available. Please be patient as most of temporary moves will be of short duration.
2. Please discuss any concerns you have about the move with the move coordinator for your area, who will relay your concerns to the move team.
3. At the completion of each office move, but before the technology staff leave the area, each coordinator should conduct a survey and contact the appropriate Leased Property staff person to report any phones, computers, printers, etc., that are not yet working.
4. Employees will be permitted to take only their chairs, computers and file cabinets to their new locations. Additional furniture such as desks, credenzas and bookcases will be available in their new office locations. However, staff with verified ADA issues may request an exemption to accommodate their needs. Otherwise, once the move is complete, there will be opportunities to swap or acquire additional furniture from remaining, unclaimed items. Items that cannot be acquired in this manner must be purchased through the normal procurement process.

Once the entire move is finished, each staff member will be asked to provide a list of his or her office equipment to update and reconcile the CHFS master inventory.

Employees who can and wish to disconnect their own computers may do so, otherwise, Information Technology staff will disconnect and reconnect computers. If you choose to disconnect your machine, do not remove surge protectors or patch cables from service poles so the person occupying your former office will have the proper equipment to connect his or her computer in that space. When IT staff arrive to connect computers, please don’t ask them to troubleshoot computer problems. They are working on a very tight schedule to ensure everyone scheduled to move each day is back to work as quickly as possible. If you have a computer problem, please submit a work request through the usual channels.

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5. The current move sequence includes cleaning all cubicle panels on the third floor. Movers will move furniture away from walls and back into place at the beginning and end of each day. The Finance Cabinet's janitorial contractor will clean the carpet immediately after the third floor panel cleaning is complete, so keep things off the floor in anticipation of carpet cleaning. The panels on all other floors will be cleaned in the future on a designated schedule. The carpet on all floors is cleaned annually by Finance.

6. Packing cartons are delivered to offices in advance of their moves. As soon as you are moved, unpack these carton and stack them in a common area close to a main hall so they can be used by others. There is a sufficient but limited supply of packing cartons, so please make sure to unpack quickly and resist the temptation to take them home for personal use. The movers will collect them periodically and deliver them to the next office slated to move. Please do not to take boxes when there are others slated to move before you.

All office items should be marked with labels attached to the top and side of cartons indicating the division name, employee's name and phone extension. Please do not write directly on cartons as they will be reused several times. Each temporary and permanent office area will be labeled with the phone extension number to make locating offices easier. Check with your office move coordinator to see if you need to make your own labels or if they will be provided.

7. Take home all personal items, such as kitchen appliances, refrigerators, decorative items and furniture so moving cartons are put to best use moving work-related items and to maximize limited space for those moving to temporary quarters. You may return personal items at your convenience once you have been located to your permanent office space. Kitchen appliances, however, should be left home unless they are located in a common break room and/or necessary to accommodate a documented ADA need.

8. As employees move into permanent spaces, movers are willing to rearrange furniture as long as this does not require relocation of power poles. Please determine in advance how you want your furniture arranged as the movers' time for each office move is very limited.

9. All schedule changes will be communicated to move coordinators as soon as possible.

10. Conference and break areas for all staff are included in the space plans. It is necessary in some cases for two or more offices to share common break rooms due utility logistics and for energy efficiency.

11. The move plan includes work space to accommodate all personnel positions approved for offices in this building, including contractors. Offices that are empty due to personnel vacancies may be used temporarily for another purpose until new staff is hired.

12. Above all, please help make this move as comfortable and stress-free as possible by remaining positive. Moving is a big change, but if we stay focused on our goal - a more efficient and user-friendly work environment for all employees - the transition will go more smoothly.

To date, most offices that have already moved have submitted work requests to Leased Properties for printer connections, panel replacements to reduce the size of cubicle openings, furniture repairs, etc. About 85 percent of these requests were filled prior to the March 7 start of the Medicaid move. Remaining work requests will be filled as time allows during or following completion of the remainder of the move.

For more information, specific, detailed move plans are posted in each lobby or you may contact your move coordinator.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber



Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.

Customer satisfaction is a vital part of any service-oriented job. From office to office, our customers vary - some are internal and external. Even when customers seem unreasonable, we should remember to try to treat them with respect. To reduce irritation when helping customers, use a warm tone of voice. A pleasant voice can boost cooperation and defuse confrontation. Try smiling the next time you have a difficult customer on the phone - you can't help but sound pleasant. Your kind response may turn that person's day around.